

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENNA PRIORITY

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USIAEA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, PARM, IAEA

SUBJECT: SEMINAR ON ENHANCED STORAGE OF SPENT FUEL

REF: (A) STATE 146239; (B) STATE 152323; (C) VIENNA 06221

1. AS MISSION IS AWARE, IN CONJUNCTION WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S APRIL 7 NUCLEAR POLICY STATEMENT, THE USG IS ANXIOUS TO EXPLORE POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES REGARDING SPENT FUEL DISPOSITION WHICH COULD SERVE TO MINIMIZE INCENTIVES FOR ANY COUNTRY TO OPT PREMATURELY FOR A COMMITMENT TO REPROCESSING, PARTICULARLY IN NEAR-TERM WHILE ALTERNATIVES ARE UNDER INVESTIGATION. IN THIS REGARD, THE US SEEKS TO GAIN A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEEDS AND PROBLEMS CONFRONTING OTHER STATES IN THE REALM OF SPENT FUEL DIS-
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POSITION--WHICH WILL BE INCREASED SOMEWHAT IN COUNTRIES AGREEING TO FOREGO NEAR-TERM REPROCESSING--AND TO UNDERTAKE AN EXAMINATION OF THESE PROBLEMS ON A TIMELY BASIS.

2. WHILE THE MATTER OF SPENT FUEL HANDLING AND STORAGE WILL DOUBTLESS BE EXAMINED IN DETAIL DURING THE COURSE OF THE PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE EVALUATION,

IT APPEARS THAT SOME ASPECTS OF THIS ISSUE MAY LEAD THEMSELVES TO NEAR-TERM EXAMINATION. NRC HAS DEVELOPED PLANS FOR A 2 TO 3 DAY SEMINAR TO BE OFFERED TO REPRESENTATIVES

OF REGULATORY AND SAFETY AGENCIES OF COUNTRIES INTERESTED IN ENHANCING THE CAPACITY OF REACTOR SPENT FUEL POOLS. MISSION IS NOW REQUESTED TO ASCERTAIN INTEREST OF AGENCY IN SPONSORING SUCH A SEMINAR TO BE HOSTED BY NRC IN BETHESDA IN THE FALL OF 1977. NRC WOULD PROVIDE LECTURERS, MEETING ROOM AND HANDOUT MATERIALS. INVITED PARTICIPANTS WOULD BE EXPECTED TO BEAR OWN TRAVEL AND LIVING EXPENSES, EXCEPT PERHAPS IN THOSE CASES WHERE AGENCY MAY BE ABLE TO PICK UP COSTS FOR THE LDS'S WHO ARE PARTIES TO THE NPT WHO HAVE NEED TO ATTEND. COUNTRIES MOST LIKELY TO BENEFIT FROM SEMINAR WOULD BE THOSE CURRENTLY ACCUMULATING SPENT FUEL IN SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNTS.

3. PURPOSE OF SEMINAR WOULD BE TO FOSTER INTEREST BY

FOREIGN REGULATORY AUTHORITIES IN ENHANCEMENT OF STORAGE CAPACITY AND TO INCREASE CONFIDENCE IN THEIR ABILITY TO REVIEW THE SAFETY OF PROPOSED ENHANCEMENT SCHEMES. THE SEMINAR WOULD INCLUDE ORIENTATION ON NRC EXPERIENCE, PLANS AND EVOLVING STANDARDS FOR SAFETY EVALUATION OF ENHANCED STORAGE FACILITIES. ERDA PRESENTATION ON SPENT UNREPROCESSED FUEL (SURF) AND ON IRRADIATED FUEL STORAGE STUDIES WOULD ALSO BE INCLUDED, AS WOULD AN OPPORTUNITY

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FOR INVITED PARTICIPANTS TO DESCRIBE THEIR RESPECTIVE ACTIVITIES TO MEET SPENT FUEL STORAGE REQUIREMENTS. A POSSIBLE VISIT EITHER TO A VENDOR WITH EXPERIENCE IN ENHANCED SPENT FUEL STORAGE OR TO A REACTOR SITE WHERE STORAGE ENHANCEMENT IS IN PROGRESS MAY ALSO BE INCLUDED.

4. NRC WOULD LIKE AN EARLY INDICATION OF AGENCY'S INTEREST IN SPONSORSHIP OF THE SEMINAR, AND DATES AND ARRANGEMENTS AGENCY WOULD PROPOSE. VANCE

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